Union Finance Minister, in its meeting held on 1st July, 2009 and the HLC approved as under:-

(i) Rs. 83.83 crores from National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) subject to the adjustment of 75% of balance available in the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) account of the State.

(ii) Rs. 14.28 crores from Special Component of Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP), implemented by the Department of Drinking Water Supply.

Expansion of NAIS

3666. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether only 4 per cent of the country's farmers have availed the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS) cover and more than 57 per cent farmers are unaware of crops being insured;

(b) whether a modified version of the existing insurance scheme for farmers is under examination by Government to expand the risk cover to more and more farmers;

(c) whether the present crop insurance scheme covers 23 States and 2 UTs and whether the Agricultural Insurance Corporation is insisting for a hike in premium for expanded coverage; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) No, Sir. At present, about 15.8% of total farmer's holdings are being covered under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS). For better awareness about the scheme and to expand its coverage, particularly for non-loanee farmers, publicity campaigns both in print and electronic media through States/implementing agency is carried out.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) NAIS, at present, is being implemented by 25 States and 2 Union Territories.

No, Sir. For normal risk coverage (sum insured) flat premium rates ranging between 1.5% to 3.5% for food (including pulses), oilseeds and actuarial rates for annual commercial/ horticultural crops are being charged. In case farmer wants to avail higher level of risk coverage (upto 150% of sum insured) commercial/actuarial rates of premium would be charged in respect of food and oilseed crops.

Alternative arrangements to tackle the uncertainty of monsoon

3667. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of rain fed agriculture in the country;

(b) whether some alternative arrangements have been made for rain fed agriculture in the country in view of uncertainty of the monsoon;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any assessment has been made of the ground water utilization by the farmers for irrigation purposes;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) About 57% of the net sown area is cultivated under rainfed condition.

(b) and (c) Government has accorded very high priority to the holistic and sustainable development of rainfed areas through integrated watershed management approach. Following major schemes are being implemented by Government to enhance soil and water conservation.

Ministry of Agriculture

(i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA)

(ii) Soil Conservation for enhancing productivity of degraded lands in the catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone River (RVP and FPR)

(iii) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA)

Ministry of Rural Development

(iv) Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)

Government of India has established the National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) to address various problems of farming in the rainfed areas and to ensure a coordinated strategy for development of rainfed areas. Under the programmes like Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Food Security Mission, Micro Irrigation, National Horticulture Mission also, special focus is given to rainfed areas for improving the livelihood and agricultural productivity.

(d) to (f) No specific assessment has been made regarding percentage of farmers utilizing ground water for irrigation. However, assessment of ground water resources is carried out jointly by Central Ground Water Board and State Ground Water Organisations. As per the assessment carried out during 2004, the ground water draft for irrigation is 212 billion cubic meter per year. About 60% of the total irrigated land in the country is irrigated by ground water.

Losses due to drought

†3668. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.